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MHLW Proposes Revisions to the Standards of Use for Sodium Chlorite

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Approved By:

Jennifer Clever

Prepared By:

Suguru Sato

Report Highlights:

On April 18, 2013, the Government of Japan (GOJ) announced revisions on the use of the food additive sodium chlorite. The Embassy comment period for these changes will close on May 2, 2013. After that, MHLW will hold a domestic public comment period and submit a WTO notification. These will be other opportunities for interested parties to comment on this subject.

General Information:

On April 18, 2013, the Government of Japan (GOJ) announced revisions on the use of the food additive sodium chlorite. The Embassy comment period for these changes will close on May 2, 2013. After that, MHLW will hold a domestic public comment period and submit a WTO notification. These will be other opportunities for interested parties to comment on this subject.

Any parties interested in submitting comments to MHLW should do so as soon as possible. MHLW will also notify the proposed changes to the WTO/SPS committee, which will provide an additional chance for interested parties to submit comments on this subject. The actual WTO/SPS notifications can be found at the site below.

http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/work_and_doc_e.htm

After the WTO comment period closes, a final report will be released based on the conclusions reached by a session of the Pharmaceutical Affairs and Food Sanitation Council scheduled to be held at a later date. The Council's report will constitute the final decision.

Comments to the GOJ can be made either in Japanese or English and can be sent to the below points of contact:

GOJ's contact point for comments

Hiromi MATSUDA, Ms.

Standards and Evaluation Division,

Department of Food Safety,

Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau,

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

1-2-2, Chiyoda-ku, Kasumigaseki,

Tokyo, 100-8916

Tel: 03-5253-1111, ext. 2459

Fax: 03-3501-4868

matsuda-hiromi@mhlw.go.jp

Post requests that the U.S. Embassy - Tokyo also be copied on any comments at agtokyo@usda.gov to allow them to be considered as part of the official U.S. Government comments to the WTO.

Revision of Standards for Use of Sodium Chlorite

Japan is going to revise standards for use of Sodium Chlorite

Under Article 10 of the Food Sanitation Act, food additives shall not be used or marketed without authorization by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare. When compositional specifications or standards for use or manufacturing are established for food additives based on Article 11 of the act, those additives shall not be used or marketed unless they meet the standards or specifications.

In response to a request from the Minister, the Committee on Food Additives of the Food Sanitation

Council that is established under the Pharmaceutical Affairs and Food Sanitation Council has discussed the adequacy of the revision of standards for use of Sodium Chlorite [CAS No. 7758-19-2]. The committee has concluded that the Ministry should revise the standards based on Article 11. For details, see Attachment 1-1.

Attachment 1-1

Standards for Use of Sodium Chlorite

Current standards

Cherries.	No limit	Shall be decomposed or removed before the preparation of the final food.
Citrus peels for confections.		
<i>Fuki</i> (Japanese butterbur)		
Grapes.		
Peaches.		
Eggs (for shells).	0.50 g/kg of dipping solution	
Processed <i>kazunoko</i> (herring roes), excluding dried and frozen <i>kazunoko</i> products		
Vegetables for raw consumption.		

Draft revised standards

Revised parts are underlined

Citrus peels for confections, Cherries, Grapes, and Peaches*	No limit	Shall be decomposed or removed before the completion of the final product.
<u>Other fruits*</u>	<u>1.20 g/kg of dipping solution or spraying liquid</u>	
<i>Fuki</i> (Japanese butterbur)*	No limit	
<u>Vegetables other than <i>fuki</i>*</u>	<u>1.20 g/kg of dipping solution or spraying liquid</u>	
<u>Processed <i>kazunoko</i> (herring roes) excluding dried and frozen <i>kazunoko</i></u>	<u>1.20 g/kg of dipping solution or spraying liquid</u>	
<u>Fresh fish and shellfish*</u>		
<u>Meat and meat products*</u>		
<u>Eggs (shells only)**</u>		

Note:

1. Foods with asterisk (*) include products in a preservable state that have been obtained by adding appropriate treatments such as salting or drying.
2. Vegetables do not include mushrooms.